



Minutes of a meeting held at Club 94 on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2017, 7.30pm

Between Board members of the Glovers Trust

And

David Mills, Supporter Director, Yeovil Town Football Club.

An Agenda had been drawn up and circulated to those attending prior to the meeting covering:

- Update on catering workstream from David Mills
- Update on suggestions put forward by the Trust
- Plans to progress other non-catering related suggestions/actions
- Alliance Group
- Q & A session/AOB

Those present at the Meeting were:

Brendon Owen, Stuart Burrell, Andy Richardson, Rod Jones, (Glovers Trust) David Mills. (Supporters Director)

Chairman Brendon Owen welcomed everyone to the meeting and especially to David Mills. Whilst there was an Agenda to follow it was understood that David wished to say a few opening words regarding positive moves that had been taken recently.

***DM confirmed:***

- *He was grateful for the invitation to meet and looked forward to a productive dialogue with the Trust going forward.*
- *He saw engagement with all fans and fan groups to be vital.*
- *There had been good recent progress on issues like ticket bundles, pop up tea bars, extra staff in the Marquee, but this should only be a start and an indication of what could be done.*
- *Although the Supporters Alliance had been key to these recent changes, DM very much wanted to the Glovers Trust to join the S.A. as this would make the*

*group even more influential (as the Trust's 300 plus members would take the combined membership of the Alliance to over 1,000)*

- *That he would work to try to find a way for the Trust to be involved in the Alliance without compromising their independence.*
- *It was his job to improve the link between fan and the club and the Club Chairman fully backed DMs work*

#### **Update on Catering Workstream**

The Trust became aware of the announcement regarding your Catering Workstream a couple of weeks ago and we feel that we need to know more about this group and get it out in the public domain.

#### ***DM confirmed:***

- *This group meets once a week. It involves Clive Robinson, Kirstie Baker, James Hillier, Rich Rendell (as Chairperson of the Supporter Alliance) and himself.*
- *The group looks at comments from all areas regarding catering and hospitality and deals with them.*
- *The group is dedicated to making progress, not just being a talking shop hence the improvements seen to date.*
- *Answering a question on pop up tea bars, DM confirmed that one had been trialled in a location adjacent to tea bar 5 (corner of Screwfix and Radio Cabs stand) for the first three games of the season. The trial had shown that there was a roll for a pop tea bar in that location but not at every game, so the group had decided to deploy it on a game by game basis going forward based on expected gates. The pop up concept had been further expanded with the deployment of the Glovers on a roll unit on the roundabout by the marquee and this effectively acts as an extra option for fans using T2 (corner of Tamburino and Thatchers Stand)*
- *The burger, chips and a drink special offer was time limited and had now expired. However other special offers are going to be deployed for selected future games.*
- *DM now visits most areas of the stadium at matches including the marquee pre-game and a different tea bar at half time.*

The Trust referred to minutes of a meeting with the Club on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2017 when it was agreed that Clive Robinson would trial the implementation of a speed bar in the supporter's marquee. Nothing had been done in response to that agreement and here we are in September being told it wasn't possible to do it straight away because of licensing laws.

#### ***DM said:***

- *That Rich Rendell on behalf of the Supporter Alliance has also been pushing heavily on this topic, plus DM had seen social media comments and other date stretching back many years.*
- *He understood the frustrations but asked for scope to resolve this matter and confirmed that he had already established that a separate (to the main bar)*

*speed bar was not in accordance with the licence for the marquee. Because of this he had already asked for an informal meeting with licensing to discuss options.*

- *Regarding the undertaking in February DM said he had asked about this and had been advised that there had apparently there had been a misunderstanding about this. The Corporate Hospitality Manager was of the view that he had delivered on this matter via a separate area of the existing bar where service supposed to be faster. However, it was now clear that most fans expected a speed bar to something separate to the main bar.*

The Trust stated that it was not good enough to say he had only just come into this as this issue had a long history and waters ran very deep and had done so for some 10 years or more.

*DM said progress was now being made and although he thought it was right to learn from what had happened in the past, it was not productive to dwell on it. DM highlighted that in a short space of time more progress on this matter than had been achieved in the last 10 years, including deploying an extra person to the marquee team which had mitigated the issue until the speed bar matter is resolved.*

A discussion took place about the fact that there are three bars at H.P that are underutilised.

*DM said that fans could go up to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor bars and use them if they paid a membership. For example, it was possible for any home fan (subject to capacity and dress codes) to buy a match day pass for the Alec Stock lounge for £50 for the season or £2 per match (DM later clarified that these passes could be bought for the club office reception). Membership for the Glovers Lounge is also available at £200 for the season. DM said he was looking at licensing conditions and covenants at Huish Park that impacted on drinking options for fans and this was a subject the Supporter Alliance were very pursuing via the Catering & Hospitality group.*

The Trust's view of the Covenant is that it states there shall be no sale of alcohol to the general public attending H.P. Sales shall only be made to members. The Trust suggested, because of the confusion regarding membership that the Club publish exactly what the situation is on social media.

A final point regarding catering was that an assurance had been given to DM that no snack bar should ever run out of stock. If there was anything to the contrary then he wished to be told.

Agenda items 2-4 were dealt with under one heading.

The recent issue regarding season ticket numbers was discussed.

*DM said he thought he could have handled the issue better in the first place but was pleased that the club subsequently issued the numbers.*

The Trust suggested that this sort of fiasco leads to a lack of trust and transparency and it thereby questioned his credibility.

*DM said that in general terms he thought part of the issue with communications overall was that sometimes the club misunderstood fans but also that the reverse sometime applied. Whatever the situation however it was DMs job to improve these communications, something he is determined to do. DM also said that he thought that sometimes there was a delay in the club saying things in public as there was a perception that even if the club was*

***saying something entirely positive, a very small minority would seek out and focus on a negative viewpoint.***

The Trust pointed out that there is currently no communication between the Club and themselves. The Trust have not been able to schedule meetings with the Club and have been excluded from the Alliance Group meetings because of the rules that the Club introduced.

***DM agreed that the next set of Alliance Group meeting minutes would be published and that it was his job to meet and communicate with the Trust and other fan groups and he was happy to do this. DM highlight that the Chairman of YTFC was aware of and fully supported DM meeting the Trust and other groups.***

At a meeting with the Club on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2016 it was agreed that the Club would review the associated terms and conditions set against the Alliance Group and alter as necessary to be more representative of what the Club are hoping to achieve and their expectations of the member groups. The Trust saw little progress in the amendment of the Club's rules that would allow the Trust to take its place at the Alliance Group meetings.

**DM stated that he had drawn up a draft set of revised rules etc but due to holiday period had not been able to get them agreed yet but he was keen to progress this matter.**

The Trust queried why dates of meetings were not announced, why there were no agendas produced and why no minutes had been seen. A request was made by the Trust to send a Board member to the next Alliance Group meeting with a watching brief. The Trust wanted to see how these meetings are conducted and whether they had any credibility.

***DM said he would check the possibility of the request and subsequent to the meeting it was confirmed that the Trust were welcome to send an observer to the next meeting***

At a meeting with the Club on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2017 it was agreed that the Club would create a list of roles for which they require volunteers and publish this regularly on the Club website and social media outlets. The Trust were not aware of this being done.

***DM agreed to action this by the Stadium Manager contacting the Trust to discuss what volunteers were needed***

#### **Q & A session/AOB**

With the dramatic downturn in season ticket renewals and so many life-long supporters choosing not to continue their association with the Club, the Trust wondered why the Club seemed to show no concern at the situation. The only statement made regarding the falling attendances was blamed on school holidays and small away fan numbers. The Club had the opportunity after the first home game to be honest about the situation and explain how they were going to try and rectify the problem. They chose not to. The Trust asked if the Club even care. Had they contacted the many supporters who had not renewed and asked their reasons. No members of the Trust had been approached.

***DM said that he understood that season ticket holders (for whom the club had email addresses) had been emailed plus many others phoned. He also confirmed the Chairman,***

*Board and everyone at the club genuinely did care about the situation and wanted to see the club progress on and off the field. After the meeting DM gave the ticket office an example of someone who had at the meeting who had not renewed season ticket and asked them to investigate.*

The Trust suggested that he made a statement expressing his disappointment at the numbers and how he would try and improve things.

The Trust wanted DM to know the feelings of supporters, their disappointment at the perceived running down of their Club. The Trust represented many passionate fans who are totally disconnected with the Club they love.

*In response DM said that there was a real commitment at the club to move matters forward on and off the field and that any perception that the club was being run down was wrong.*

*DM also set out a challenge to the Trust to identify ten realistic off the field things that he could do to improve the fan experience at Huish Park. He pledged to complete the ten tasks within a period of three months and if there was a good reason why any could not be done – explain why. DM said would be prepared to receive the appropriate criticism if fans found the results to be unsatisfactory.*

The Trust accepted his challenge on the condition that it was opened up to all Yeovil fans to put forward the tasks to be undertaken. The Trust would collate the fans responses and whittle them down to the ten most popular and achievable, publish them and send them to DM to complete.

*DM stated his intention to visit the marquee at each home match this season. The Trust asked him if he was prepared to take the microphone and do a question and answer session. He said he was as long as the questions were appropriate and within his remit.*

*DM enquired where the funds raised in the marquee go. It was confirmed they go to the running costs of the Trust and the rest is kept in reserve to spend in future in accordance with the Trust's rules and objectives. Full accounts will be available at the Trust AGM*

*DM asked what the membership of the Trust currently was, but it was confirmed that it was not possible to give an accurate figure until the AGM*

The meeting ended at 10.15pm.